

Some Thoughts Regarding Senate Bill 13-176

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First of all, I would like to know why SB 13-176 has been introduced in our legislature. Does it promise fiscal returns that would significantly improve the numerous, significant, on-going budget problems we face in Colorado? And how did you come by this information? Your sponsorship suggests that you are aware of such investment opportunities for Colorado's state monies. So I ask again, where did you get such information? It seems to me that such a situation provides a significant potential conflict of interest between those elected and those appointed to make policy decisions and those who may benefit from this information now or in the future. So if you are one of those who is privy to such information you should publicly disclose this fact and disqualify yourself from voting or commenting on SB 13-176.

Second, where would the suggested "surplus" revenue come from that could be invested in the Israeli debt obligations, how much is available, how is it currently invested, how secure are these investments and what is their return? I am sure you well remember that we reduced our income tax rate from 5% to 4.63% in 1999 and that cut of .37% has led to a dramatic reduction in revenue of over 5 Billion dollars in the last decade or so that has led to significant cuts in all levels of our educational system and the government services we are used to taking for granted in Colorado.

Third even if we can find such revenue would it not be much better to invest it in programs that directly benefit citizens and businesses in Colorado? For example could not such revenues be better used to provide educational opportunities for those who have lost their jobs to gain new skills and knowledge that would help them get new jobs and thus not only reduce our unemployment costs but make it possible for them to pay state income taxes again and lead directly to new business and investment opportunities for businesses located in our state. And should we not create policies that would significantly reduce the costs of higher education?

Finally, I find such proposed legislation distressing because I believe very strongly that any state's or nation's legislation should support the common good. And this phrase, "concern for the common good" is the very last phrase I would use to describe Israeli policy over the past several decades. Read the book called the Lemon Tree by Sandy Tolan. It distresses me greatly to realize that so many people have been forcefully relocated and their property confiscated by those who believe they have special rights and therefore unlimited power over others. While the holocaust was incredibly terrible and current events in Palestine are not nearly of such a magnitude, it still seems sad and ironic that this same type of mentality now appears to be directed by Israeli policy against those who are of Palestinian descent.

Do we want our state's future policies to reflect the tragic events of current and past history or do we want it to reflect the best that we can be? Please vote NO on SB 13-176. Moreover, many of us would gladly support a House Resolution that encourages individuals and businesses to divest any monies invested in such stocks, bonds or debt obligations whether in Israel or any other nation or, business that rejects policies that support the common good. Thank you for considering these comments.